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Summary record of the 30th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 23 December 2003, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Kmoníček ..... (Czech Republic)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

Contents

Agenda item 125: Pattern of conferences (*continued*)

Agenda item 122: Programme planning (*continued*)

Agenda item 59: Strengthening of the United Nations system (*continued*)

Agenda item 121: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 (*continued*)

Questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 (*continued*)

Draft report of the Fifth Committee

Agenda item 119: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United nations (*continued*)

Closure of the work of the Fifth Committee during the main part of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly

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The meeting was called to order at 4.20 p.m.

Agenda item 125: Pattern of conferences (*continued*) (A/C.5/58/L.42)

Draft resolution A/C.5/58/L.42

1. **Mr. Bouheddou** (Algeria), Vice-Chairman, introduced draft resolution A/C.5/58/L.42.

2. *Draft resolution A/C.5/58/L.42 was adopted.*

Agenda item 122: Programme planning (*continued*) (A/C.5/58/L.46)

Draft resolution A/C.5/58/L.46

3. **The Chairman** drew attention to draft resolution A/C.5/58/L.46, which had been submitted on his behalf by the representative of Nigeria.

4. *Draft resolution A/C.5/58/L.46 was adopted.*

Agenda item 59: Strengthening of the United Nations system (*continued*) (A/C.5/58/L.47)

Draft resolution A/C.5/58/L.47

5. **Mr. Mazumdar** (India) introduced draft resolution A/C.5/58/L.47. The word "differences" in paragraph 13 should be replaced by "changes".

6. *Draft resolution A/C.5/58/L.47, as orally corrected, was adopted.*

Agenda item 121: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 (*continued*) (A/C.5/58/L.48, L.53 and L.56 (Parts I and II))

Draft decision A/C.5/58/L.53

7. **Ms. Buchanan** (New Zealand) introduced draft decision A/C.5/58/L.53.

8. *Draft decision A/C.5/58/L.53 was adopted.*

Questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 (*continued*) (A/C.5/58/L.48)

Draft resolution A/C.5/58/L.48

9. **Mr. Chaudhry** (Pakistan) introduced draft resolution A/C.5/58/L.48 and made a number of oral corrections to the text, which contained no ambiguities and whose implications were well known.

10. **Mr. Martini** (Italy), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, the associated countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, and, in addition, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Serbia and Montenegro, and The former Republic of Macedonia, said that, notwithstanding the many difficulties that had had to be overcome, the Organization now had a new budget that would allow it to fulfil its increased international mandates. The first practical steps had also been taken to effectively implement the long-awaited reform of the Organization's budgetary cycle and the Secretary-General had been given wider powers to redeploy staff on an experimental basis. Those reforms would help to modernize the United Nations and lead to further efficiency gains. He looked forward to progress towards the reform of the Joint Inspection Unit during the first part of the Assembly's resumed fifty-eighth session.

11. **Ms. Afifi** (Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the successful conclusion of the budget negotiations had reconfirmed the esteem in which the Fifth Committee was held and was a true reflection of the goal of achieving the broadest possible agreement set out in General Assembly resolution 41/213. The Group of 77 and China attached great importance to the effective and smooth functioning of the Organization and had consistently maintained the position that resources proposed by the Secretary-General and approved by the General Assembly must be commensurate with the mandates given by Member States to the Secretary-General. The Group would continue to contribute to the ongoing reform process in order to ensure that the Organization was able to discharge its mandated programmes and activities.

12. **Mr. Repasch** (United States of America) said that, even though the negotiations had been frustrating at times, the outcome was very satisfying. The proposed programme budget contained many reforms and innovations, which would pay dividends to the Organization in the future.

13. **Mr. Iosifov** (Russian Federation) said that the draft resolution could not have been produced without

the invaluable assistance of the staff of the Organization and the secretariat of the Committee. The draft text was an essential step towards enabling the Organization to fulfil the mandates it received from the Member States.

14. *Draft resolution A/C.5/58/L.48, as orally corrected, was adopted.*

15. **Mr. Yamanaka** (Japan) said that the large increase in the regular budget of the Organization was of great concern to the Government of Japan, whose capacity to pay assessed contributions was not unlimited. If its assessed contributions rose, the Government was obliged to reduce its voluntary contributions to international development and humanitarian agencies. That had already happened in the current fiscal year, and some voluntary contributions would be further reduced, if not eliminated altogether, in the fiscal year ahead. The Government of Japan did not wish to be forced into taking such action in the name of strengthening the United Nations.

16. Since their resources were finite, Member States must weigh the need to increase staffing at Headquarters, from assessed contributions against the need to carry out development-related and humanitarian activities in the field, funded from voluntary contributions. In order to make the Organization efficient and effective, the Secretariat must determine its own priorities for the use of assessed contributions, and communicate those priorities to the Member States. The Government of Japan must remain accountable to its taxpayers and be able to explain the reasons for certain expenditures. The Secretariat must in turn provide relevant, sufficient and timely budgetary information. If it did not, the Government of Japan would find it difficult to pay its assessed contributions in the future.

Draft report of the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/58/L.56 (Parts I and II))

17. **The Chairman** drew attention to the draft report of the Committee contained in document A/C.5/58/L.56 (Parts I and II) and invited the Committee to take a decision on the recommendations contained in Part II.

Draft resolution II

18. **The Chairman** recalled that draft resolution I, entitled "Questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005", had already been adopted and drew attention to draft resolution II, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005".

19. *Draft resolution II was adopted.*

Draft resolution III

20. **The Chairman** drew attention to draft resolution III, entitled "Special subjects relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005".

21. *Draft resolution III was adopted.*

Draft resolution IV

22. **The Chairman** drew attention to draft resolution IV, entitled "Unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for the biennium 2004-2005".

23. *Draft resolution IV was adopted.*

Draft resolution V

24. **The Chairman** drew attention to draft resolution V, entitled "Working Capital Fund for the biennium 2004-2005".

25. *Draft resolution V was adopted.*

Agenda item 119: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*) (A/C.5/58/L.54 and L.55)

Draft decision A/C.5/58/L.54

26. **Mr. Abelian** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the words "fifty-ninth session" in the first paragraph should be replaced by "fifty-eighth resumed session".

27. *Draft decision A/C.5/58/L.54, as orally corrected, was adopted.*

Draft decision A/C.5/58/L.55

28. *Draft decision A/C.5/58/L.55 was adopted.*

Closure of the work of the Fifth Committee during the main part of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly

29. **Ms. Bertini** (Under-Secretary-General for Management) said that the Committee had reached agreement on a reasonable budget figure and had made reasonable progress in implementing the reform of the Organization. As he was required to do, the Secretary-General would honour the budgetary limits which the Committee had established and would comply with its requests for reports and reviews.

30. In particular, the Secretariat would comply with the Committee's desire to suspend recruitment to fill vacancies arising in the General Service category during the forthcoming biennium, but it hoped that the Committee would take account of the valuable contribution that staff in the General Service category made to meeting the objectives of the Organization. In his report, entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387 and Corr.1), the Secretary-General had recognized that General Service staff were "an extraordinary source of skill and expertise".

31. **The Chairman** declared that the Fifth Committee had completed its work for the main part of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.